

Sūrah Al-Ḥashr

(The Mustering)

This Sūrah is Madanī, and it has 24 verses and 3 sections

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

With the name of Allah, the All-Merciful, the Very-Merciful

Verses 1 - 5

سَبَّحَ لِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ ۖ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ﴿١﴾ هُوَ الَّذِي أَخْرَجَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ لِأَوَّلِ الْحَشْرِ ۖ مَا ظَنَنْتُمْ أَنْ يَخْرُجُوا وَظَنُّوا أَنَّهُمْ مَانِعَتُهُمْ حُصُونُهُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ فَأَتَتْهُمْ اللَّهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَمْ يَحْتَسِبُوا وَقَذَفَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمُ الرُّعْبَ يُخْرِبُونَ بُيُوتَهُمْ بِأَيْدِيهِمْ وَأَيْدِي الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ۖ فَاعْتَبِرُوا يَا أُولِيَ الْأَبْصَارِ ﴿٢﴾ وَلَوْلَا أَنْ كَتَبَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمُ الْجَلَاءَ لَعَذَّبَهُمْ فِي الدُّنْيَا ۚ وَلَهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ عَذَابُ النَّارِ ﴿٣﴾ ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ شَاقُوا اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ ۚ وَمَنْ يُشَاقِقِ اللَّهَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ ﴿٤﴾ مَا قَطَعْتُمْ مِّنْ لِّينَةٍ أَوْ تَرَكْتُمُوهَا قَائِمَةً عَلَىٰ أُصُولِهَا فَبِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَلِيُخْرِجَ الْفَاسِقِينَ ﴿٥﴾

Allah's purity has been proclaimed by all that is in the heavens and all that is on the earth. And He is the All-Mighty, the All-Wise. [1] He is the One who expelled

the disbelievers of the People of the Book from their homes at the time of the first gathering.¹ You did not expect that they would leave, and they deemed that their fortresses would protect them from Allah. But Allah came to them from where they did not expect, and cast fear in their hearts when they were spoiling their homes with their own hands and with the hands of the believers. So, learn a lesson, O those who have eyes. [2] And if Allah had not destined exile for them, He would have punished them in the world. And for them in the Hereafter is the torment of the Fire. [3] That is because they were hostile to Allah and His Messenger. And whoever has hostility with Allah, then Allah is severe in punishment. [4] Whatever palm-trees you have cut down, or have left them standing on their roots, it was with Allah's permission, and so that He might disgrace the transgressors. [5]

Commentary

Sequencing of Sūrahs

The preceding Sūrah had condemned the close friendship developed by the hypocrites with the Jews. The present Sūrah describes the punishment faced by the Jews in this world in the form of exile and in the Hereafter in the form of grievous torment.

Cause of Revelation

The story of their banishment from Madīnah is that when the Messenger of Allah ﷺ migrated to Madīnah, he concluded a peace treaty with the Jews. Banū Naḍīr, one of the Jew tribes living around Madīnah, were one of the three signatories. The latter tribe lived about two miles

(1) The original word used in the text is 'ḥashr' which means 'gathering' or 'mustering' and after which this Sūrah is named. In the present context, it may be interpreted in two different ways. One, that it refers to the gathering of the Muslims who ordered the Jews to leave Madīnah due to their constant conspiracies and breaches of the treaty they had with the Muslims. According to this interpretation, the verse means that the Jews of Bani Naḍīr were made to leave the city at the first gathering of the Muslims without fighting and without any further attempt to attack them. The second interpretation is that it refers to the gathering of the Jews for the purpose of emigration. In this case the verse indicates that it was their first exile before which they did not face such a situation. It has another subtle indication to the fact that this was their first exile which will be followed by another one, i.e. the exile faced by the Jews in the days of Sayyidnā 'Umar ؓ. (Muhammad Taqi Usmani)

away from Madīnah. Once it happened that ‘Amr Ibn ‘Umayyah Ḍamurī killed two persons by mistake. According to Law, the Muslims jointly had to settle the blood-wit. The Holy Prophet ﷺ first collected money from the Muslims for this purpose. Then he decided to collect money from the Jews as well in terms of the treaty he already had with them. The Holy Prophet ﷺ visited the tribe of Banū Naḍīr for this purpose. Before his arrival, they conspired to put an end to his life. When he reached there, they made him sit against a wall and said to him that they were going to gather the blood money. In the meanwhile, they secretly plotted that someone should climb the particular wall in the shade of which the Holy Prophet ﷺ was sitting and drop a rock on him and kill him. But before the Jews could execute their sinister plan, Allah revealed to him in time about their plot and conspiracy. The Holy Prophet ﷺ instantly left the place, returned to Madīnah and sent a message to Banū Naḍīr that they have betrayed the treaty. Therefore, they are given ten days in which to leave the town and go into exile, and were warned that if they would not meet the deadline, they might be killed at sight. They decided to leave, but ‘Abdullāh Ibn ‘Ubayy prevented them. He said that they did not have to leave because he had an army of two thousand men who were willing to lay down their lives to protect the Jewish lives. It is stated in Rūḥ-ul-Ma‘ānī on the authority of Ibn Ishāq that along with ‘Abdullāh were Wadī‘ah Ibn Mālīk, Suwaid and Rā‘ish. The Jews fell into the trap of the three and sent a message to the Holy Prophet ﷺ that they would not leave. As a result, he together with the noble Companions marched on that tribe. The Jews locked themselves up in the fortresses, but the hypocrites, being essentially cowards, hid themselves. The Holy Prophet ﷺ laid a siege to the Jewish fortresses. Some of their date palms were felled and others were burnt down. Eventually, they agreed to go into exile. So, the Holy Prophet ﷺ forced them to evacuate and abandon their fortresses and, in kindness, allowed to take with them enough provisions, whatever their cavalry and camelry could carry except arms and weapons, which, they were told, would be confiscated. Some of them went to Syria, while others went to Khaibar. On account of their greed, they carried with them even beams, rafters, woods and the doors of their houses. This incident took place after the battle of Badr in Rabī‘-ul-Awwal 4 AH. Sayyidnā ‘Umar ؓ, during his caliphate, sent them away to Syria to live with the rest of the Jews. The two banishments go under

the names of the 'first banishment' and the 'second banishment'.
[Zād-ul-Ma'ād].

The Characteristics of Sūrah Al-Ḥashr and the History of Banū Naḍīr

The entire Sūrah Al-Ḥashr was revealed in connection with Banū Naḍīr [Ibn Ishāq]. Sayyidnā Ibn 'Abbās ؓ used to call this Surah, Sūrah Banī Naḍīr. [Ibn Kathīr]. Banū Naḍīr were the descendents of the Holy Prophet Hārūn ؑ. Their forefathers were scholars of Torah, which contained a full description of the Last Prophet ﷺ such as his physical features, his signs of Prophet-hood and his migration to Yathrib (Madīnah). This tribe was under the impression that the Last Prophet would be one of the descendents of Holy Prophet Hārūn ؑ and they would have the pleasure of being in his company. For this reason, they migrated from Syria and settled in Yathrib. Some of the contemporaries of the Holy Prophet ﷺ were also scholars of the Torah, who saw his physical features and other signs of Prophet-hood and recognized him as the Final Messenger but, as they thought that he would be one of the descendents of Hārūn ؑ, they were disappointed when he was raised among the descendents of Ismā'īl ؑ. They were jealous and, on account of their jealousy, they were inhibited from embracing the Faith. But in their heart of hearts they knew that Sayyidnā Muḥammad ﷺ was the Final Messenger of Allah. When, in the battle of Badr, they saw the amazing victory of the Muslims and the humiliating defeat of the pagan Quraish, their degree of certainty was somewhat augmented. They even expressed their amazement. But distinguishing between truth and falsehood on the basis, measurement, or standard of the apparent victory and defeat is a weak yardstick. As a result, when in the battle of Uḥud, Muslims initially suffered a temporary setback and some of the Companions were martyred, their certainty was shaken. After that they started conspiring with the pagan Arabs.

When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ migrated to Madīnah, as stated earlier, he with his political sagacity felt his first task was to enter into a peace treaty with the Jews of Madīnah and other neighbouring Jewish tribes, stipulating that he would not fight them and they would not fight him, nor would they aid and abet those who take up arms against the Muslims, and if the Jews were attacked, the Muslims would assist them.

There were many other clauses in the peace accord, the details of which are available in 'Sirah of Ibn Hishām'. All the Jewish tribes, including Banū Naḍīr, had their area, strong fortresses and orchards at a distance of 3.2 kilometers from Madīnah.

Up to the point of the battle of 'Uḥud, they apparently kept to the terms of the treaty. But after that battle, they betrayed the treaty and started conspiring secretly, in that a leader of Banū Naḍīr, Ka'b Ibn Ashraf, went to Makkah with a caravan of forty Jewish members to curry favour with the pagan Quraish who were anxious to avenge the defeat of the battle of Badr, and had gone to the battle of 'Uhud for that reason but were eventually defeated in the latter battle as well. The defeated men returned and the Jews met them. They conspired and agreed to wage a war against the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and the Muslims. Ka'b Ibn Ashraf with his forty Jewish members and Abū Sufyān with his forty members of pagan Quraish entered the Sacred Mosque and, holding on the curtain of the House of Allah, pledged that they would jointly fight the Muslims and annihilate them.

When, after this pledge, Ka'b Ibn Ashraf returned to Madīnah, Jibrā'īl عليه السلام descended and informed the Messenger of Allah ﷺ about the entire episode and the details of the pledge. In the meantime, the Holy Prophet ﷺ issued the command to kill Ka'b Ibn Ashraf. A noble Companion Muḥammad Ibn Maslamah killed him.

Subsequently, Banū Naḍīr hatched many different plots to harm the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, one of which was, as reported earlier, their plot to kill him. The Holy Prophet ﷺ, after collecting blood money from the Muslims in a particular case of murder, decided to collect money from the Jews in terms of the treaty that was concluded between himself ﷺ, the tribes of Banū Naḍīr, Banū Qainuqā' and Banū Quraizah. Before his arrival, they planned to kill him, as detailed above. The person who was entrusted with the task of throwing a rock on the head of the Holy Prophet ﷺ was a Jew 'Umar Ibn Jaḥḥāsh by name who had volunteered himself for the task. Had it not been for the revelatory information the Holy Prophet ﷺ received from Allah, their plot would have worked. But Allah protected His Messenger ﷺ and the conspiracy was thus thwarted and their plan failed.

A Lesson

It is a remarkable co-incidence that subsequently the entire Banū Naḍīr clan was expelled from Madīnah except for two persons who embraced the Islamic Faith and were spared: One of them was 'Umar Ibn Jaḥḥāsh and the other was his paternal uncle Yamin Ibn 'Amr Ibn Ka'b. [Ibn Kathīr].

The Story of 'Amr Ibn Umayyah Ḍamurī

Under the rubric of 'cause of revelation' above, reference was made to the incident that 'Amr Ibn Umayyah Ḍamurī accidentally killed two men. The Muslims as well as the Jews had to jointly settle the blood-wit in terms of the treaty existing between them. The Holy Prophet ﷺ collected money from the Muslims for this purpose. Then he decided to collect money from the Jews. The Holy Prophet ﷺ visited the tribe of Banū Naḍīr in their area for this purpose. Ibn Kathīr writes that the enemy plans to harm the Muslims are many and long-drawn-out. One famous incident in Islamic history is that of Bi'r Ma'ūnah: Some of the hypocrites and the non-believers requested the Messenger of Allah ﷺ to send a band of the noble Companions to preach the religion of Islam. He dispatched about seventy Companions for the purpose. Later on it was discovered that this was a mere conspiracy. The plan was to surround them and kill them, in which they succeeded. Of the seventy Muslims, only 'Amr Ibn Umayyah Ḍamurī managed to escape. He had seen and experienced the dishonesty and treachery of the non-believers, and how they mercilessly massacred sixty-nine of his brethren. In the circumstances, one can imagine how his emotions would have been against the enemies. Co-incidentally, when he was returning to Madīnah he encountered two non-believers and killed them. Later on it was discovered that the two men killed were members of Banī 'Āmir, a tribe which was an ally of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Banū Naḍīr was also an ally of Banī 'Āmir tribe.

The agreements of Muslim politicians were not like the political agreements of today in which every effort is made at the very beginning to find out ways to escape or violate it. In the case of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and the early sincere Muslims, whatever the tongue uttered or the pen wrote was treated as part of religion and Divine law and binding. When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ learnt about 'Amr Ibn 'Umayyah Ḍamurī's error of judgement, he decided to pay the blood-wit, in terms of the sacred

law of Shari'ah, for the two men killed. In this matter, he first collected money from the Muslims and then he had to go to Banū Naḍīr for collection. [Ibn Kathīr]

Tolerance and Human Rights in Islam: A Model for Present-day Politicians

There are many lessons in the incidents cited above for the heralds of human rights, and for the political leaders and the big powers who talk highly about them and are deemed as 'Champions of Human Rights'. Let us look at the case of Banū Naḍīr: They unceasingly were involved in conspiracies, endlessly behaved treacherously and continuously plotted to kill the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. Would the present-day political leaders or heads of governments tolerate all this? How would they treat them? Nowadays, the opponents are killed even by sprinkling petrol on them or in some other execution style. There is no need for political leadership or government for that purpose. A few wicked hooligans gather together and carry out the executions. The official wrath and anger manifest itself much more grievously .

But here we are describing the government of Allah and His Messenger ﷺ: Even when the enemy conspiracies and treacheries reached the peak, no massacre was contemplated. No thought of usurping their property and wealth was ever considered. In fact, the following humane punitive measures were taken:

[1] They were allowed to take all their wealth with them, and were ordered only to evacuate the town.

[2] To do this, they were given ten days, so that they might be able to take their things comfortably and transfer themselves to some other place. When they did not comply, it became necessary to take a sterner measure at national level.

[3] Some trees were though cut down and others were burned down, but even at that stage, no edict was issued to burn down their fortresses or attack them and kill them on a large scale.

[4] When they expressed that it was in their best interests to go into exile, they were given the choice that each man could take with him as much provisions as his camel could carry. As a result, they carried their

hooks, latches, doors, planks, beams and rafters.

[5] No Muslim ever frowned upon any of the persons transferring his stuff. They took their things and moved out peacefully and safely.

The Holy Prophet ﷺ showed this kindness to them when they were completely subdued and he was in complete command of the situation. He had the power to fully avenge their treachery, dishonesty and conspiracy. But he did not do it. This behavior of the Holy Prophet ﷺ corresponds to his behavior with the pagans of Makkah when he entered the city after the triumph.

Let us now explain some expressions of these verses in the background of these events.

لَاوِلِ الْحَشْرِ (...at the time of the first gathering...59:2). The word *hashr* means 'to rise'. One reason for referring to it as the 'first mustering' is given by Maulānā Thanawi in his Tafsīr. They were settled at one place since ancient times. This event of banishment took place for the first time in their life. The second reason could be that all the non-Muslims of the Arabian peninsula would have to be evacuated in future, so that the peninsula might become a strong fortress of Islam. As a result, a second banishment was to take place at some later time. This happened during the caliphate of 'Umar ؓ, the Holy Prophet's ﷺ Second Successor. He banished all the Jews who had settled in Khaibar. He ordered all the Jews to leave the Arabian peninsula. From this point of view, Banū Naḍīr's banishment is the 'first banishment' and the 'second banishment' took place in the time of Sayyidnā 'Umar ؓ.

فَاتَهُمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَمْ يَحْتَسِبُوا (...But Allah came to them from where they did not expect...59:2). The phrase 'Allah came' means 'the command of Allah and His obedient angels came'.

يُخْرِبُونَ بُيُوتَهُمْ بِأَيْدِيهِمْ وَأَيْدَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ (...they were spoiling their homes with their own hands and with the hands of the believers....59:2) Banū Naḍīr had spoiled their houses by removing their doors and shutters. 'Spoiling their homes with the hands of the believers' means that when the Jews locked themselves up in their fortresses, the Muslims destroyed the trees and homes outside the fortresses to make them surrender.

مَا قَطَعْتُمْ مِّن لِّينَةٍ أَوْ تَرَكْتُمُوهَا قَائِمَةً عَلَىٰ أُصُولِهَا فَبِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَلِيُخْرِىَ الْفَاسِقِينَ (Whatever

palm-trees you have cut down, or have left them standing on their roots, it was with Allah's permission, and so that He might disgrace the transgressors....59:5). The word *līnah* refers to a 'palm-tree'. Another opinion states that besides '*ajwah*', all other palm trees are referred to as *līnah*. Banū Naḍīr's orchards were comprised of palm trees. The reference in the verse is to the cutting, by the orders of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, of the palm trees of Banū Naḍīr who had shut themselves in their fortresses in defiance of the Holy Prophet's orders to surrender. So, some of the blessed Companions, in order to anger them or cast terror into their hearts, cut and burned down some of their date trees. Other Companions felt that the palm-trees should not be destroyed because soon, God willing, the Muslims will be victorious and the orchards will fall to their lot as booty. Thus they did not participate in the destruction of the trees. This was a difference of opinion. Later on when this disagreement was discussed, the Companions who participated in the destruction of the trees or orchards felt guilty. They asked the Messenger of Allah ﷺ whether they were really guilty of a sin, in that they destroyed the property that was going to fall to the lot of the Muslims. Verse [5] was revealed on that occasion to assuage the guilt-feeling of the Muslims that whatever they have done, whether they cut the trees or left them uncut, was by Allah's leave and it was done to degrade the ungodly Jews.

Commandment of the Holy Prophet ﷺ is in fact the Commandment of Allah: A Warning for those who Refute the authority of the Aḥādīth

In verse [5], the cutting down of the trees or leaving them uncut is called *bi-idhni-llah* [with Allah's permission] whereas neither of the actions was the explicit command of Allah. Apparently, whatever each group did was on the basis of independent reasoning [*Ijtihād*]. At most, it is possible that they might have sought the permission of the Holy Prophet ﷺ which is a Ḥadīth. The 'Prophet's permission' is referred to as 'Allah's permission' in the Qur'ān. Thus the Qur'ān makes plain that Allah has given His Messenger the right to legislate laws. The forthcoming verse [7] of this Surah puts it that believers need to hold fast to what the Messenger bids them and abstain from what he forbids them. This shows conclusively that the Sunnah is an independent source of the Islamic Law.

Disagreement in *ijtihād* is not a sin

Another important principle derived from this verse is that if those who are competent to undertake *ijtihād* disagree with another on a particular issue, so as one of them holds something as permissible, while the other takes it as impermissible, neither of them would be counted as sinners, nor will the principle of *nahy 'anil-munkar* (forbidding evil) be applied to this situation, because none of the two rulings is an 'evil' in the sight of Allah. Under the concluding phrase of verse [5] وَلِيُخْزِيَ الْفَاسِقِينَ (...and that he might disgrace the transgressors) it was explained that the act of cutting or burning down the trees cannot be construed as disorderliness. But it was done to degrade the unbelievers, and therefore it carries reward in the Hereafter.

Ruling

Is it legitimate to demolish or burn down the homes of the infidels, or cut or burn down their trees, or destroy their fields and farms? The leading authorities on Islamic Jurisprudence are not unanimous on this question. Imām A'zam Abū Ḥanīfah رحمه الله تعالى rules that all of these actions are permitted. Shaikh Ibn Humam رحمه الله تعالى, however, qualifies the ruling and restricts it. He rules that all of the above are permitted if and only if the enemies cannot be vanquished or overpowered without resorting to the above measures, or if the victory of Muslims is not probable or likely. The whole purpose of this ruling is to break the might and power of the enemy. In the case where Muslims do not win the struggle, destruction of their moveable and immovable properties may be included in weakening their might and main. [Maḏharī]

Verse 6 - 10

وَمَا أَفَاءَ اللَّهُ عَلَى رَسُولِهِ مِنْهُمْ فَمَا أَوْجَفْتُمْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ خَيْلٍ وَلَا رِكَابٍ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يُسَلِّطُ رُسُلَهُ عَلَى مَنْ يَشَاءُ ۖ وَاللَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿٦﴾ مَا أَفَاءَ اللَّهُ عَلَى رَسُولِهِ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْقُرَى فَلِلَّهِ وَ لِلرَّسُولِ وَلِذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالْمَسْكِينِ وَابْنِ السَّبِيلِ ۚ كَيْ لَا يَكُونَ دُولَةً بَيْنَ الْأَغْنِيَاءِ مِنْكُمْ ۚ وَمَا اتَّكُمُ الرَّسُولُ فَخُذُوهُ ۚ

وَمَا نَهْنُكُمْ عَنْهُ فَانْتَهُوا ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ ﴿٦﴾
 لِلْفُقَرَاءِ الْمُهَاجِرِينَ الَّذِينَ أُخْرِجُوا مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ وَأَمْوَالِهِمْ يَبْتَغُونَ
 فَضْلًا مِنَ اللَّهِ وَرِضْوَانًا وَيَنْصُرُونَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ ۚ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ
 الصَّادِقُونَ ﴿٧﴾ وَالَّذِينَ تَبَوَّءُوا الدَّارَ وَالْإِيمَانَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ يُحِبُّونَ مَنْ
 هَاجَرَ إِلَيْهِمْ وَلَا يَجِدُونَ فِي صُدُورِهِمْ حَاجَةً مِّمَّا أُوتُوا وَيُؤْثِرُونَ
 عَلَىٰ أَنْفُسِهِمْ وَلَوْ كَانَ بِهِمْ خَصَاصَةٌ ۚ وَمَنْ يُوقِ شُحَّ نَفْسِهِ
 فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٨﴾ وَالَّذِينَ جَاءُوا مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ يَقُولُونَ
 رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ لَنَا وَلِإِخْوَانِنَا الَّذِينَ سَبَقُونَا بِالْإِيمَانِ وَلَا تَجْعَلْ فِي
 قُلُوبِنَا غِلًا لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا رَبَّنَا إِنَّكَ رَءُوفٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿٩﴾

And whatever *fai'*¹ (left over property) Allah has passed on to His Messenger from them, you had not urged on your horses or camels for it, but Allah gives predominance to His messengers over whomsoever He wills, and Allah is Powerful over every thing. [6] Whatever *fai'* Allah has passed on to His Messenger from the people of the towns is for Allah and for the Messenger, and for the kinsmen and the orphans and the needy and the wayfarer, so that it may not circulate only between the rich among you. And whatever the Messengers gives you, take it, and whatever thing he forbids you, abstain (from it). And fear Allah. Indeed Allah is severe in punishment. [7] (And *fai'* is especially) for the poor emigrants who were expelled from their homes and properties, while they were seeking the grace of Allah and (His) pleasure, and were helping Allah and His Messenger. They are the truthful. [8] And (*fai'* is also for) those who established themselves in the homeland (of Madīnah) and in faith before the former ones (arrived in Madīnah), who have love for those who emigrated to them, and do not feel in their hearts any

[1] *fai'* is a term for the properties left over by the non-Muslims and possessed by a Muslim state without fighting. As opposed to this, *ghanimah* (booty) is a property taken over by fighting. The properties of Bani Naḍīr were taken over without fighting, hence the word *fai'*. That is why we did not translate *fai'* as 'booty'.

need for what is given to the former ones (from *fai'*), and give preference to them over themselves, even though they are in poverty. And whoever is saved from the greed of his soul, then such people are the successful. [9] And (*fai'* is also) for those who came after them saying, "Our Lord, forgive us and those of our brothers who preceded us in faith, and do not place in our hearts any rancor against those who believe; Surely, Our Lord, you are Very-Kind, Very-Merciful." [10]

Commentary

The Concept of *Fai'* and its Law of Distribution

وَمَا أَفَاءَ اللَّهُ عَلَى رَسُولِهِ مِنْهُمْ (And whatever *fai'* [left over property] Allah has passed on to His Messenger from them, ...59:6). The word *afā'a* is derived from *fai'un* which means 'to return'. Thus the time of the afternoon when the shade of things returns to the east is referred to as *fai'*. The real ownership of the entire universe belongs to Allah. The ownership of things can be ascribed to human beings when Allah Himself declares them, through His Law, to be under the ownership of a human being. However, when people rebel against Allah, indulging in disbelief and *shirk*, their lives and properties are confiscated through properly constituted Authority and their ownership return to the Real Owner, Allah. From this point of view, all properties acquired from the unbelievers should be called *fai'*. However, the sacred Law of Shari'ah draws a distinction between the terms *ghanimah* [spoils] and *fai'*. The former refers to a property which is acquired from non-Muslims through active armed struggle, as in [8:41] وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّمَا غَنِمْتُمْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ (And know that whatever spoils you receive...). However, the word '*fai'*' refers to a property acquired without resorting to an actual fight, (like in a state of peaceful surrender.) These two terms have been used to set down rules of these two types in the Holy Qur'an. Sūrah Al-Anfāl dealt with injunctions relating to *ghanimah* or spoils, which is acquired from non-Muslims in the wake of armed struggle. The present Sūrah takes up the subject of *fai'* and the law of its distribution. The term *fai'* includes any property or wealth which the non-Muslims might leave behind and run away, or make over to the Muslim Authority willingly or with consent like *Khirāj*, *jizyah* or commercial duty.

مَا أَفَاءَ اللَّهُ عَلَى رَسُولِهِ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْقُرَى (Whatever *fai'* Allah has passed on to His Messenger from the people of the towns... 59:7). The phrase *ahl ul-qurā*

or 'the people of the towns' refers to the Jewish tribes like Banū Naḍīr and Banū Quraizah whose wealth and property were obtained without armed struggle. The laws pertaining to the distribution of the two types of spoils are different. Unlike *ghanimah* [spoils of war], *fai'* is not distributed among the *mujāhidin* (participants in fighting). The Holy Prophet ﷺ is granted full authority to give as much as he likes to whomsoever he likes or to retain for himself at his discretion. However, a few classes of beneficiaries have been clearly defined. The *fai'* must be distributed among the defined five classes.

The foregoing verses set down the rules pertaining to *fai'*, its beneficiaries and its method of distribution. Some details are available at the beginning of Sūrah Al-Anfāl in Volume 4 of Ma'āriful Qur'ān, pages 148-151 and more details of the injunctions are available in the same volume on pages 221-229, under verse 41. It needs to be borne in mind that the wordings of Sūrah Al-Anfāl regarding *Khums* [1/5th] of *ghanimah* is almost identical to the wordings of *fai'* mentioned in the present verse. Let us compare: 8:41 reads: 'وَأَعْلَمُوا أَنَّمَا غَنِمْتُمْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ فَإِنَّ لِلَّهِ خُمُسَهُ وَاللِّرَّسُولِ وَلِذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالْمَسْكِينِ وَابْنِ السَّبِيلِ (And know that whatever spoils you receive, its one-fifth is for Allah and His Messenger and for kinsmen and orphans and the needy and the wayfarer... 8:41). Verse [7] of the present Sūrah reads as above which means: "Whatever *fai'* Allah has passed on to His Messenger from the people of the towns is for Allah and for His Messenger, and for kinsmen and orphans and the needy and the wayfarer....59:7). In both these verses, six classes of beneficiaries are mentioned: Allah, the Messenger, kinsmen, orphans, the needy and the wayfarer. It is all too clear that Allah is the Real Owner and Master of this world, the next world and the entire creation. The name of Allah in relation to the shares has been mentioned by way of blessing or benediction, because the wealth or property thus associated with Allah's name attains honour and distinction. It also points to the permissibility and purity of the wealth. This is the view of Sayyidnā Ḥasan Al-Baṣrī, Qatādah, 'Aṭā', Ibrāhīm, Sha'bī and the commentators in general. [Maḥzarī]

In the commentary of Sūrah Al-Anfāl, it was fully and exhaustively explained how wealth attains honour and distinction by the mention of Allah's name which, in brief, amounts to the following: The prophets are

not allowed to avail of Ṣadaqāt or charities, even though they are derived from the pure wealth of the Muslims. The question might arise how the *ghanīmah* and *fai'* are made lawful for the Holy Prophet ﷺ, while they are derived from the infidels? By mentioning Allah's name at the beginning of the verse, this doubt has been removed. The point is that Allah is the real owner of the entire universe. Human beings come to own certain things when Allah by His own grace declares for them to pass into human ownership. However, when a certain segment of human beings rebels against Allah, Jihād is waged against them by Allah's command, which means that, during the war, their lives and properties are no longer sacred. In this way, all their wealth is confiscated in the name of the Authority in command. The confiscated properties are named *ghanīmah*, spoils or war booty - which goes out of the ownership of disbelievers and gets itself deposited separately as being under the ownership of Allah alone. And as stated earlier, the word *fai'* contains the meaning of 'return' and the wealth is so called because its ownership is restored to the original owner, Allah. No human being has any entitlement to it. The beneficiaries who will receive a share of it will receive it direct from Allah, and therefore it will be lawful and pure like water and self-growing grass which are direct Divine gift, lawful and pure.

In short, the mention of Allah's name in this context points to the fact that the entire wealth belongs to Allah, and it is granted to the beneficiaries on His behalf. It is no *ṣadaqah* or *khairāt* [charity].

This leaves us with five classes of beneficiaries: [1] The Messenger ﷺ; [2] kinsmen; [3] orphans; [4] the needy; and [5] the wayfarer. The same five classes of beneficiaries of *khums* [1/5th] were determined in [8:41] and now the same classes of beneficiaries are determined for *fai'* property. The rules relating to both *ghanīmah* and *fai'* properties are identical: They are in full authority of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and after him in the authority of the Caliphs. The Authority may retain them for the benefit of Muslims in general, or they may deposit them in *bait-ul-māl* [public treasury] and do not grant anything to anyone, or they may distribute them. If it is decided to be distributed, it must be done within the five classes defined. [Qurṭubī]

The practice of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs and of other noble

Companions shows that *fai'* property was in the Authority of the Holy Prophet ﷺ during his time, and was left to his discretion. He may disburse it as he deemed fit. After him, his Caliphs controlled it and disbursed it according to their best judgement.

After the demise of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, his share of the booty fell into disuse. The word 'Kinsmen' in the verse means the kinsmen of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. There were two reasons why they were granted a share from this booty: Firstly, because they helped the Holy Messenger ﷺ and supported him in his Islamic activities. Therefore, even the rich kinsmen of the Holy Prophet ﷺ used to be granted a share from the booty. [2] Ṣadaqah [charity] was unlawful for the Holy Prophet's kinsmen. Therefore, the poor and needy relatives of the Holy Prophet ﷺ used to be granted a share from the *fai'* rather than from the Ṣadaqah [charity]. After the demise of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, helping and supporting him came to an end. The first reason no longer existed. Therefore, the share from the *fai'* of the rich relatives fell into disuse like that of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. However, the poor and the needy relatives continued to receive their share from the *fai'* on account of poverty and need. Priority was given to the poor and needy relatives of Allah's Messenger ﷺ over other poor and needy people. [Hidāyah]. See Ma'āriful Qur'ān, Vol. 4/pp 228-229.

كَيْ لَا يَكُونَ دُولَةً بَيْنَ الْأَغْنِيَاءِ مِنْكُمْ (...so that it may not circulate only between the rich among you.59:7). The word *dūlatah* refers to the 'wealth or good fortune that exchange hands'. [Qurtubī] The verse means that Allah has determined the heads of expenditure for the *fai'* in this way so that the wealth does not circulate among the wealthy, who would spend it as they wish and desire and give none of it to the poor. The verse is aimed at abolishing an old practice of the Days of Ignorance where the circulation of such wealth used to remain confined to the privileged and propertied class or caste. The poorer segment of the society had no entitlement to the wealth of the nation.

Effective Measures taken by Islam against concentration of wealth

Allah is the creator, cherisher and sustainer of the universe. He knows the human needs. All human beings, whether believers or non-believers, whether lineally rich or poor, are equal in the sight of

Allah. Allah has to a very large extent kept the distribution of man's natural and basic needs in His own Hands, so that every class, every region, every weak and strong people might be able to benefit equally. Allah has, through His consummate wisdom, kept all such needs beyond man's personal domination. No human being dare take possession of these things personally. Air, wind, atmosphere, the Sun, the Moon, the light of the stars and planets, the rain-laden clouds – all these things are such without which no human can survive for a moment. Allah, the Almighty, has declared all natural resources a public endowment for all. Not even the greatest of sovereign authorities, by virtue of their ruling powers, can ever monopolize or take possession of them. Allah's creation avails of them equally everywhere.

The second category of necessities of life is what the earth produces, as for instance water and other food-stuff. This is not commonly available. However, Islamic law has declared hills and mountains, unpopulated jungles and natural springs as public endowments. However, legitimate right of ownership of some parts of the earth are allowed under special laws to specific human beings. Some people illegitimately grab the land, but naturally even the greatest capitalist cannot derive benefit from the land without the help of the poor, the farmers or the laborers. Thus despite a sort of ownership of it, he is forced to give shares to other powerless and the indigent.

The third category is gold, silver and money, which do not fall under the basic and natural necessities of life. But Allah has made them the means of acquiring all essentials of life. People who mine gold and silver from the ground become their owners subject to certain rules. The right of their ownership is transferred in various ways to other people. If they are widely distributed and are in easy circulation in human society, no individual will go without food and clothing. But what happens in our days is that the greedy people want to benefit from the wealth to the exclusion of others. This led to miserliness and greed which, in turn, led to some old and some new systems of monopolization and concentration of wealth. As a result, people's wealth concentrated in the hands of a few capitalists and people at the helm of affairs. The rest of the population who were poor and indigent had to suffer, because they were deprived of their share in the nation's wealth. This economic situation, as a reaction, gave birth to such unreasonable economic systems as communism and

socialism.

Islamic economic system, on the one hand, shows the highest respect to individual property rights, in that an individual's lawful property is as sacred and inviolable as human life itself, and human life is as sacred and inviolable as the House of Allah. Its violation has been most strongly prohibited. On the other hand, if a hand filches or steals it, it is, under penal law, amputated. In the third place, all such doors have been shut, through which a particular individual or group of individuals might monopolize it and deprive the general public.

The unjust and unbalanced way of acquisition of wealth, such as by usury, speculation, gambling and betting, allows wealth to concentrate and circulate in the hands of a few individuals. Islam has declared all such gains as unlawful and cut at the root of all such transactions in trade and tenancy that are based on unlawful practices. Wealth that is gained through lawful means has specific ways of spending: The needy and the indigent are shareholders in the wealth in the form of *Zakāh*, *Ushr*, *Ṣadaqat-ul-Fiṭr* [*Id* charity], various forms of expiation and so on. The surplus wealth may be given away in voluntary charity. If a man leaves behind assets at the time of his death, Divine wisdom has set down specific rules according to which it must be distributed. The shareholders in the assets are the relatives of the deceased, the principle in this case being *al-'aqrab- fal-'aqrab*, that is 'relatives in order of relationship'. In other words, Islamic law of succession is based on blood relationship; the nearer in degree to the deceased excludes the more remote. The needy in general have not been made the shareholders, because if that were the case, the dying person would have felt the need to spend his assets anyhow, rightly or wrongly, before his death. When he sees only his near and dear ones receiving, this urge does not develop in his heart.

This means of acquiring wealth blocks the way to monopolization. The second means of acquiring wealth is war and *jihād*. The gains made in this way are distributed according to the Islamic rules. Some of them have been set down in Sūrah Al-Anfāl and others in this Sūrah. How unwise and short-sighted are those people who give up Islam's balanced system of economics based on justice, fair-play and compassion, and innovate new systems of wealth distribution, which are unjust and unbalanced, and disturb world peace?

وَمَا آتَاكُمُ الرَّسُولُ فَخُذُوهُ وَمَا نَهَاكُمْ عَنْهُ فَانْتَهُوا ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ (... Whatever the Messenger gives you, take it; and whatever thing he forbids you, abstain [from it]. And fear Allah....59:7). This verse is in connection with *fai'* property, and it purports to say that Allah has set down the beneficiaries of this property. However, the question which beneficiary will receive how much have been left to the discretion of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Therefore, the Muslims are advised to happily accept the amount the Holy Prophet ﷺ grants them, and they should not be anxious to receive what he has not given to them. This has been further emphasized by the injunction *إَتَّقُوا اللَّهَ* (Fear Allah). If anyone collects under false pretext more than what he is granted, Allah is fully aware and will punish him.

The Messenger's Command is Binding like the Qur'ānic Command

Although the verse was revealed in connection with *fai'*, its words are general. They are not specific to wealth. They cover all the commands as well. Hence, the generalized meaning of the verse is that whatever the Holy Prophet ﷺ gives to a person, be it wealth, any other grant or any command, the people must show their willingness to accept it. And whatever he forbids them, they should stay away from it.

Many of the Companions took the generalized sense of the verse, and on the basis of it, they took the Holy Prophet's ﷺ commandment as binding as the Qur'ānic commandment. Qurṭubī said that in this verse the antonym of *ātā* [gives] is *nahā* [forbids]. This shows that the verb *ātā* [gives] is used in the sense of *amara* [commands] which is the direct antonym of *nahā* [forbids]. The Qur'ān, instead of using the direct opposite of *naha* [forbids] which is *amara* [commands], employed the verb *ātā* [gives] presumably to embrace the context of the subject-matter where the verse occurs, that is, the disbursement of *fai'* property.

Sayyidnā 'Abdullah Ibn Mas'ūd ؓ once saw a person in the state of *iḥrām* wearing sewn clothes (which is impermissible in that state). He asked him to take off the clothes. The person asked him to recite a Qur'ānic verse in support of his claim that a pilgrim is prohibited to put on a sewn garb. Sayyidnā 'Abdullah Ibn Mas'ūd ؓ recited this very verse وَمَا آتَاكُمُ الرَّسُولُ فَخُذُوهُ (Whatever the Messenger gives you, take it....").

Imām Shāfi' رحمه الله تعالى once said to his congregation: (Ask whatever question you wish, and I will answer from the Qur'ān.) A person said that

a pilgrim killed a wasp in the state of *ihrām* and asked: "What is the rule about it?" Imām Shāfi' رحمه الله تعالى recited this verse of the Qur'ān مَا آتَاكُمُ الرَّسُولُ فَخُذُوهُ (Whatever the Messenger gives you, take it...." and coupled it with a Tradition which gives the injunction relating to the killing of a wasp. [Qurtubī].

لِلْفُقَرَاءِ الْمُهَاجِرِينَ ([And *fai'* is especially] for the poor emigrants...[59:8]). The few verses from here till the end of the section describe the poor emigrants (*muhājirīn*), helpers (*Anṣār*) and the general members of Ummah that were yet to come in this world. Grammatically, the prepositional phrase 'for the emigrants' is a complement to the prepositional phrase 'for the kinsmen' occurring in verse [7] [Maḥzarī]. What this verse purports to say is that although the beneficiaries of *fai'* are orphans, the needy and the wayfarers as mentioned in the preceding verse, priority and precedence will be given to those whose service to religion, personal qualities and religious perfection are well-known.

Priority should be given to the Indigent Righteous and Religious Scholars serving the Cause of Islam when distributing Charity

This shows that although charities, especially *fai'* are meant to fulfill the needs of the indigent Muslims in general, the righteous, especially students and learned scholars serving the cause of religion should be given priority over all others. This is the reason why Islamic governments gave allowance from the *fai'* fund to learned scholars, *muftīs* and judges for serving the cause of education, propagation of Islam and reform of human beings, because these verses establish two categories of the noble Companions. Under the first category fall the emigrants who in the very first instance made great sacrifices for Islam and the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. They endured great hardships, and eventually bid farewell to their wealth and property, to their land and country, and to their relatives and the near and dear ones, and emigrated to Madīnah. Under the second category fall the *Anṣār*, the natives of Madīnah who helped the emigrants and cooperated with them. They invited the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and with him the emigrants and thus caused the whole world around them to stand in their opposition. Their hospitality is unparalleled in the annals of the nations of the world. After these two major categories, comes a third category which comprises those people who embraced Islam after the blessed Companions and followed their footsteps closely. The last category

embraces all Muslims who will follow until the Last Hour. The three categories are discussed below, in succession.

The Merits of al-Muhājirīn [The Emigrants]

لِلْفُقَرَاءِ الْمُهَاجِرِينَ الَّذِينَ أُخْرِجُوا مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ وَأَمْوَالِهِمْ يَبْتَغُونَ فَضْلًا مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَرِضْوَانًا وَيَنْصُرُونَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الصَّادِقُونَ

([And *fa'i* is especially] for the poor emigrants who were expelled from their homes and properties, while they were seeking the grace of Allah and (His) pleasure, and were helping Allah and His Messenger. They are the truthful....59:8)

This verse describes all the characteristics of the emigrants. The first of them is that they were driven from their homes and wealth, that is to say, their only crime was that they had embraced Islam and supported the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, as a result of which the pagans of Makkah persecuted them, so much so that they had to abandon their hearths and homes and emigrate to Madīnah. Some of them had to tie stones to their stomach on account of unbearable hunger, and others used to protect themselves against cold by digging holes in the ground, because they did not have clothes to save them from the chill of winter. [Maẓharī, Qurṭubī]

An Important Issue: The rule about the control of unbelievers over the wealth and property of the Muslims

This verse describes the emigrants as poor, whereas a *faqīr* [poor] in Islamic law refers to a person who has no property whatever, or a person who possesses a little property, but is poor because he does not possess the minimum amount of property constituting *niṣāb* of *Zakāh*. However, most of the emigrants were rich, wealthy and affluent while they were in Makkah. Even after migration, if the wealth had remained in their ownership, it would be inappropriate to refer to them as 'poor' because they had *niṣāb* of *Zakāh*. But the Qur'ān refers to them as 'poor' and thus points out that the wealth and property which they had left behind in Makkah, and the pagans subsequently took possession of them, became the property of the pagans and the Muslims lost its ownership.

Therefore, Imāms Abū Ḥanīfah and Mālik رحمه الله تعالى ruled that if Muslims abandon their homes and possessions and migrate to some other land, and the non-believers take control of their abandoned homes and property, the ownership passes into their hands and Muslims lose

ownership. Similarly, if - God forbid! - the unbelievers conquer an Islamic country, usurping Muslim property and wealth, then after having full control over it, they are deemed as owners of that property. Consequently, their transactions of sale and purchase of such properties are recognized in Shari'ah. Maḥzarī has, on this occasion in his commentary, cited all the relevant Traditions supporting this view.

The second characteristic of the emigrants is described thus: يَتَّغُونَ فَضْلًا (...seeking the grace of Allah and [His] pleasure...59:8). When they embraced Islam, abandoned their country and wealth and migrated, they did not have any ulterior motive. They did all this only to seek Divine favour and gain His good pleasure. This indicates their perfect sincerity. The word *faql* [bounty, grace] is normally used for worldly blessings and *riḍwān* [good pleasure] for blessings of the Hereafter. From this viewpoint, the verse purports to describe that the emigrants gave up all their previous means of luxury, such as their hearths and homes, and now they were in quest of their worldly needs and the blessings of the Hereafter in the shade of Islam. Their objective was to seek the necessities of worldly life under the banner of Allah's and His Messenger's ﷺ efficacious grace.

The third characteristic of the emigrants is described thus: وَيَنْصُرُونَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ (...and were helping Allah and His Messenger...59:8). The phrase 'help Allah' means to help His religion, for which they made tremendous and amazing self-sacrifices.

The fourth characteristic of the emigrants is described thus: أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الصَّادِقُونَ (... They are the truthful...59:8). That is, such people are sincerely true in words and deeds. The covenant they made with Allah and His Messenger by reciting the *kalimah*, they duly fulfilled it and proved themselves to be true about it. This verse candidly testifies to the truthfulness of all emigrant Companions. Anyone calling any of them a 'liar' cannot be a Muslim, because he is rejecting this verse. God forbid! Rawāfiḍ call these Companions 'hypocrites'. This is a clear rejection of the verse. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ held the emigrant Companions in such high esteem that when he prayed to Allah, he would supplicate through their *wasīlah*. [as transmitted by Al-Baghawī and Maḥzarī].

The Merits of Anṣār [The Helpers]

وَالَّذِينَ تَبَوَّءُوا الدَّارَ وَالْإِيمَانَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ (And [*fai*' is also for] those who established

themselves in the homeland [of Madīnah] and in faith before the former ones [arrived in Madīnah] ...59:9). The word *tabawwu'* means 'to make dwelling in the abode'. The word *dar* refers to Madīnah which has a special distinction. Therefore, Imām Mālik رحمته الله, from one point of view, regarded Madīnah Ṭayyibah as the most distinguishable of all the cities in the world. He used to say that wherever Islam reached and any city that was conquered, it was conquered by means of *jihād* - including Makkah Mukarramah. Madīnah Ṭayyibah is the only exception. It was conquered by means of *'īmān*. [Qurṭubī].

In this verse, under the word *tabawwu'* [to settle in an abode] the words *dār* [home] and *'īmān* [faith] are coupled. It could be objected that a 'home' can be found in a place where a person might settle in, but 'faith' is not an 'abode' where a person might find a place to settle in. Some of the scholars take the position that in this context the following verbs *أَخْلَصُوا* or *تَمَكَّنُوا* to be understood and they mean "These are the people who settled in their abode and became sincere and strong in their faith". It is possible to take the word 'faith' in its metaphorical sense, that is in the sense that 'it is a fortified house' where refuge is taken. The phrase *min qablihim* [before them] describes another characteristic of Anṣār, which means that they had settled in Madīnah before the Emigrants, while Madīnah was so important a city that all the Muslims living in Makkah were ordered to emigrate to it and it became the center of Islam.

The second characteristic of the Helpers is described in *يُحِبُّونَ مَنْ هَاجَرَ إِلَيْهِمْ* (...have love for those who emigrated to them...59:9) The Emigrants from Makkah came to the Helpers, deprived and denuded of all their possessions. Normally, no community is willing to allow such a large number of distressed people to settle in their city. Instead, the quarrels between natives and emigrants are found everywhere. But the Anṣār received them with open arms and made them equal partners in their belongings. The bond of love and brotherhood which the Messenger of Allah ﷺ established between the Emigrants and the Helpers, and to which this verse bears an eloquent testimony, stands unrivalled in the whole history of human relationships. There was no dearth of the Helpers who were eager to take on the Emigrants. In fact, for each Emigrant there were several applications to take him on. There were many instances in which lots had to be cast. When the lot of a particular Helper

fell in favour of a particular Emigrant, he was handed to him. [Maẓharī]

The third characteristic of the Helpers is described in *وَلَا يَجِدُونَ فِي صُدُورِهِمْ* (...and do not feel in their hearts any need for what is given to the former ones [from *fai'*], ...[59:9]). This statement is concerned with the banishment of Banū Naḍīr and their orchards and homes falling into Muslim hands.

Distribution of Banū Naḍīr's properties

As stated earlier, the relevant verse has given discretionary powers to the Holy Prophet ﷺ in matters of distributing the *fai'* property. It was a time when the Muhājirīn (Emigrants) had neither homes of their own nor any property. They lived in the homes of the Anṣār, and worked on their farms to earn their livelihood. When the wealth of Banū Naḍīr and Banū Qainuqā' were obtained as *fai'*, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ called the leader of the Anṣār, Sayyidnā Thābit Ibn Qais Ibn Shammās ؓ, and asked him to bring his people to him. He asked: "O Messenger of Allah, should I call my tribe of the Anṣār, Banū Khazraj, or all of the tribes of the Anṣār?" He replied: "All of them." They all gathered. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ delivered a sermon in which he spoke highly of the Anṣār as to the manner in which they accommodated the Refugee brethren. He said it was a work of great determination and courage. After that he said: 'Allah has granted you the wealth of Banū Naḍīr. If you wish, I will divide the wealth between the Muhājirīn and the Anṣār; and the Refugees will remain as usual in the homes of the Anṣār. Or if you wish, the wealth may be distributed among the homeless Refugees; and they may move out of your homes and settle in their own homes.'

Having heard this sermon, two of the great chiefs of the Anṣār, Sayyidnā Sa'd Ibn 'Ubadah and Sa'd Ibn Mu'adh ؓ - stood and said: "O Messenger of Allah, we are of the view that the entire wealth of *fai'* be distributed among the Refugee brethren, and in addition they may continue to reside in our homes as usual." At this all the Anṣār unanimously said, "We concur with this decision and are happy with it." On that occasion, the Holy Prophet ﷺ supplicated for the Anṣār and their children. He then distributed the entire *fai'* among the Muhājirīn. Only two of the Anṣār received a grant from the *fai'*, because they were very poor. Their names are Sayyidnā Sahl Ibn Ḥunāif ؓ and Abū Dujānah ؓ. Sayyidnā Sa'd Ibn Mu'adh ؓ was given a sword which was a

distinguished sword of Ibn Abil-Ḥuqaiq. [Maẓharī with reference to Sabī-ur-Rashād by Muḥammad Ibn Yūsuf As-Ṣāliḥī]

The present verse admires the Anṣār on this attitude by saying, لَا يَجِدُونَ فِي صُدُورِهِمْ حَاجَةً مِّمَّا أُوتُوا (...and do not feel in their hearts any need for what is given to the former ones [from *fai'*],59:9). The word 'need' means 'any item of need'. The verse means 'Whatever the Muhājirīn were granted in this distribution, the Anṣār happily accepted it as if they had no need for any of those items. It was inconceivable that they would complain about it enviously.' When Baḥrain was conquered, the same spirit of self-sacrifice was displayed again by the Anṣār. The Holy Prophet ﷺ expressed his intention to distribute the entire conquered lands of that territory among the Anṣār, but they courteously refused to accept any share of it unless a similar share was granted to the Muhājirīn.

The fourth characteristic of the Anṣār is described in the verse is: وَيُؤْتُونَ عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِهِمْ وَلَوْ كَانَ بِهِمْ خَصَاصَةٌ (...and give preference (to them) over themselves, even though they are in poverty59:9). The word *khaṣāṣah* means 'poverty' and the word *ʿithār* means 'to prefer the wish, need and desire of others above those of oneself'. The meaning of the verse is that the Anṣār used to prefer the needs of others (i.e. the Muhājirīn,) to their own needs. That is, the former used to fulfil the needs of the latter first, then they would fulfil their own needs, even though they themselves were poor and needy.

For the interpretation of the Qur'ānic verses, there is no need to recount incidents. But because they develop in human beings the highest degree of human qualities and bring about a reform in their lives, the commentators have recounted these events in detail on this occasion, especially Qurṭubī. We cite below a few of them from his commentary.

It is recorded in Tirmidhī on the authority of Sayyidnā Abū Hurairah ؓ that one night a guest came to an Anṣārī's house. The latter had only as much food as he and his children could eat. He said to his wife: 'Put the children off to sleep somehow, and put out the lamp. Then place the food in front of the guest, and sit next to him so that he may be under the impression that we too are eating, but we will not eat so that the guest may be able to eat comfortably.' At this, the present verse was revealed. [At-Tirmidhī has rated this *ḥadīth* as '*ḥasan, ṣaḥīḥ*'].

Tirmidhī records another narration on the authority of Sayyidnā Abu Hurairah ؓ that a person came to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and said: "I am hungry and distressed." The Holy Prophet ﷺ sent a message to one of his blessed wives, but she replied: "We do not have anything except water." Then he sent a message to his another wife, and she made the same reply. Then to a third one and then to a fourth one until the message went to all the mothers of the faithful, and they all replied that they had nothing besides water. Then he addressed the congregation and asked if any of them would be willing to entertain the guest, in response to which a venerable Anṣārī said: "O Messenger of Allah, I will entertain him." So he took him with and asked his wife whether there was anything to eat. She replied: "Only as much as our children could eat." He asked his wife to put the children to sleep and then said: "Place the food in front of the guest, sit and then get up and put out the lamp. The guest should not feel that we are not eating." The guest ate the food. In the morning, the Companion went to the Holy Prophet ﷺ who informed him that Allah was very pleased with the way he handled the situation the previous night.

Mahdawī narrates a similar incident of Sayyidnā Thābit Ibn Qais ؓ, a venerable Anṣārī who entertained his guest one night by putting the light off. There is a common statement appended to all these incidents: 'The above verse was revealed in connection with this event.'

Qushairī cites a story on the authority of Sayyidnā 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Umar ؓ who reports that a person sent the head of a goat as a gift to a venerable personality from among the blessed Companions. He thought that about a Muslim brother that he and his family are more in need of this, so he sent the head to him. When the second venerable Companion received it, he sent it to a third person who in turn sent it to a fourth person. In this way it circulated in seven houses and eventually it returned to the first venerable personality. On this occasion, the verse was revealed. Tha'labī has also recorded this narration on the authority of Sayyidnā Anas ؓ.

It is recorded in Muwaṭṭa' of Imām Mālik رحمه الله تعالى on the authority of Sayyidah 'Ā'ishah ؓ that a poor person wanted something to eat. She had only one bread, and she was fasting that day. She asked her maid to give him the bread. The maid said that if it was given away,

there would be nothing left for her to break her fast in the evening. Sayyidah 'Ā'ishah رضي الله عنها insisted and gave the bread to the poor person. The maid says: "It so happened after this that a person, who was not accustomed to send any gift, sent a whole roasted goat which was completely covered with batter on the outside, which is thought to be the best Arab dish." Sayyidah 'Ā'ishah رضي الله عنها called the maid and said: "Come, eat this. This is better than that bread of yours."

Nasā'ī has recorded that once Sayyidnā 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Umar رضي الله عنهما fell sick and he felt like eating grapes. A bunch of grapes was bought for him for a dirham. Co-incidentally, a poor person came begging. Sayyidnā 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Umar رضي الله عنهما said that the bunch be given to him. One of the Companions furtively followed him, and bought off the bunch from the beggar and gave it back to Sayyidnā Ibn 'Umar رضي الله عنهما, but the beggar came again and begged, Sayyidnā Ibn 'Umar رضي الله عنهما gave it to him again. Again someone went behind the beggar secretly and bought off the bunch from him for a dirham and gave it to Sayyidnā 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Umar رضي الله عنهما. The beggar wanted to turn up the third time and beg, but the people stopped him. If Sayyidnā 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Umar رضي الله عنهما knew that the bunch is the same one that he gave out in *ṣadaqah*, he would never have accepted it and eaten it. He probably thought that someone had brought it for him from the market-place, and therefore he had eaten it.

Sayyidnā Ibn Mubārak reports on the authority of his chain of transmitters that once Sayyidnā 'Umar رضي الله عنه sent four thousand Dīnārs in a moneybag to Sayyidnā Abu 'Ubaidah رضي الله عنه with his servant, with the message that the money was being sent as a gift. He should use it as he deemed fit. The servant was instructed to remain for a while in the house to see what he would do with the money. The servant, accordingly, gave the moneybag to him and waited for a while. Sayyidnā Abu 'Ubaidah رضي الله عنه took the bag full of money and supplicated for Sayyidnā 'Umar رضي الله عنه that Allah may reward him and shower his mercy upon him. Instantly, he called his slave-girl and instructed her to give seven Dīnārs to so-and-so, five Dīnārs to so-and-so until all four thousand Dīnārs were distributed then and there.

The servant came back and narrated the story. Sayyidnā 'Umar رضي الله عنه filled another moneybag with four thousand Dīnārs and sent it with the servant to Sayyidnā Mu'adh Ibn Jabal رضي الله عنه, with the same message to him

and with the same instruction to the servant. The servant followed the instruction. Sayyidnā Mu'adh Ibn Jabal ؓ took the bag of money and supplicated to Allah for Sayyidnā 'Umar ؓ, thus: رَحِمَهُ اللهُ وَوَصَلَهُ "May Allah shower His mercy upon him and reward him." Then he too immediately sat down to distribute the money. He divided the money into many portions and sent them to different houses. His wife was watching all that was happening. She could not hold herself and eventually spoke out: "By Allah! We too are poor and we should also receive something." At that time only two Dīnārs had remained in the bag, and he gave them to her. The servant saw all this, returned to Sayyidnā 'Umar ؓ and reported to him all that he saw. He said: "They are all brothers, and they all have the same disposition."

Sayyidnā Ḥudhaifah 'Adawī ؓ narrates: "During the battle of Yarmūk, I went out in search of my paternal uncle's son [cousin] among the martyrs, and took with me some water just in case there was the last breath of life left in him, so I would give him a sip of water. When I reached him, there was the last spark of life left in him. I asked him whether he would like to have a sip of water, and he nodded 'yes'. Just as I was going to pour the water into his mouth, another martyr next to him heaved a sigh. My cousin indicated to give him the water. When I reached him and was about to give him the water, I heard the voice of a third martyr. The second martyr indicated to give the water to the third one. This series of events continued up to seven martyrs. When I reached the seventh martyr to give water, he had already breathed his last. From there I went back to my cousin, he had also met his end."

These are a few events, some of which relate to the Anṣār, and others to the Muhājirīn. About a number of these incidents, it is said that the verse under comment was revealed regarding them. In fact, there is no contradiction in these narrations, because it is a well-known habit of narrators that if a verse was revealed under a certain circumstance, and a similar incident took place on another occasion, they mention the second incident as a cause of revelation of that verse as well. In fact, all similar incidents can be said to be the cause of revelation of the verse or, at least, included in its purport.

Disposing of a Possible Doubt

Here we need to dispose of a possible doubt that might arise from the

noble Companions' narratives of self-sacrifice that were recounted above. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has prohibited for a Muslims to give away all his wealth in charity. For instance, it is reported in a Tradition that a person came with a piece of gold, about the size of an egg, so that it may be given in charity. The Holy Prophet ﷺ threw it towards himself and said: "Some of you bring all your wealth to be given away in charity, then they become poor and go around begging." The question is how and why did the Companions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ give away whatever they had in the incidents cited above despite the prohibition of such an act?

Answer to this question can be inferred from these very narratives. In fact, people's conditions are different. Accordingly, the rulings differ from condition to condition. The ruling of prohibition applies to those people who, after giving away all their wealth in charity, regret, and cannot endure their poverty but go around begging. But those people who, after giving away all their wealth in charity, do not regret or feel distressed or agitated, they in fact face the situation with calm courage and resolute endurance. For such people, it is permitted to spend all their wealth in Allah's way. Let us take the case of Sayyidnā Ṣiddīq Akbar ؓ who donated all his belongings when fund was being collected for a *jihād*. The stories narrated above belong to this category. Such people trained and developed their families also to face the ordeals of life with the same calm courage and resolute endurance. Therefore, their rights were not usurped or destroyed either. If the wealth were in the control of their families, they too would have done the same thing.

Muhājirīn [The Refugees] Reciprocate the Anṣārs' Self-Sacrifice

No social activities or self-sacrifice is possible unilaterally. It has to be bilateral. Therefore, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ has urged the Muslims to exchange gifts with each other and thus enhance their mutual love. So likewise, if a Muslim has given a gift to another, he should repay the gift as a gesture of goodwill. If Allah has granted him abundant wealth, then he should use the wealth to reciprocate. Otherwise, supplication should be enough to reciprocate. It is not in keeping with the principles of ethics or good manners to owe a debt of gratitude to people.

The Anṣār displayed a great deal of self-sacrifice in the matter of the Muhājirīn. The former made the latter partners in their homes, their shops, their businesses, their land and their agriculture. When Allah gave

the Muhājirīn affluence, they did not fall short in doing a good turn in return for their favours.

Qurtubī cites a narration of the two Ṣaḥīḥs on the authority of Sayyidnā Anas Ibn Mālīk ؓ that when the Muhājirīn arrived in Madīnah from Makkah, they were absolutely empty-handed. The Anṣār, on the other hand, had properties and lands, and they shared half-and-half of all their holdings with the Muhājirīn. The former gave half of their fruits to the latter annually. Umm Sulāim ؓ, the mother of Sayyidnā Anas ؓ, gave a few of her palm trees to the Holy Prophet ﷺ which he granted to Usāmah Ibn Zaid's mother, Umm 'Aiman ؓ.

Imām Zuhri says that Sayyidnā Anas Ibn Mālīk ؓ reports that when the Holy Prophet ﷺ returned successfully from the expedition of Khaibar to Madīnah, the Refugees - all of them - calculated all the gifts of the Anṣār and returned them. The Holy Prophet ﷺ took back the trees that were granted to 'Umm 'Aiman and returned them to 'Umm Sulāim ؓ, and granted trees to 'Umm 'Aiman from his own orchard.

وَمَنْ يُوقِ شَحْ نَفْسِهِ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ (... And whoever is saved from the greed of his soul, then such people are the successful....59:9) After the mention of the Anṣār's selflessness and self-sacrifice, a general rule of law or a universal principle is being laid down in the concluding part of verse [9]. The words *shuḥḥ* [avarice] and *bukhl* [greed, miserliness] are near synonyms. The word *shuḥḥ*, however, yields the sense of intensive greed for money and possessions. *Shuḥḥ* [avarice] and *bukhl* [greed, miserliness] are absolutely forbidden when a person fails to fulfil obligatory rights, which might be Divine rights, such as *Zakāh*, *ṣadaqat-ul-fiṭr*, 'Ushr, oblation and so on, or they might be human rights, such as the maintenance of the family, needy parents and relatives. It is repugnant and reprehensible if *shuḥḥ* [avarice] and *bukhl* [greed, miserliness] prevent one from spending for laudable and rewardable acts. If one does not spend on customary things, it is not *shuḥḥ* [avarice] and *bukhl* in terms of the sacred laws of Shari'ah.

Avarice, niggardliness and jealousy are such evil qualities as the Qur'an and Prophetic Traditions have severely denounced. There are glad tidings for those who avoid them. The Anṣār have many good qualities, among which is their immunity from avarice and jealousy.

Being free of Malice and Jealousy is a sign of one's being in Paradise

Ibn Kathīr, with reference to Imām Aḥmad, cites the following narration on the authority of Sayyidnā Anas ؓ, who says:

"We were sitting with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ when he said, 'A man is about to arrive who is from among the inmates of Paradise'. One of the Anṣārs arrived, from whose beard dripped fresh water of minor ablution [*wuḍū'*] and in his left hand were his shoes. The same incident occurred the following day. The same person came in front in the same condition. The same incident happened the third day. The same person entered in the condition described above. When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ dissolved the assembly, Sayyidnā 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Amr Ibn-ul-'Āṣ ؓ followed the Anṣārī [so as to find out the secret of his being an inmate of Paradise] and said to him: 'I had a quarrel in some matter and took an oath that I would not go home for three days. If possible, please accommodate me for three days at your home.' He agreed. Sayyidnā 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Amr ؓ spent the three nights with him. But he noticed that he did not wake up for '*tahajjud*' (voluntary nightly prayers) at night. However, when he lied on bed, he recited some '*dhikr* of Allah'. Then he would wake up for *Fajr ṣalāh*. In the course of three days, he did not hear him utter a single word but that of good. 'Abdullāh ؓ says, 'When three nights were over, and I almost thought his actions were insignificant, I gave up my secret that I had no domestic quarrel. But I continuously heard for three days the Messenger of Allah ﷺ saying a man is about to arrive who is from among the inmates of Paradise'. And for three days you arrived. Therefore, I was curious to stay with you and find out your secret act, on account of which you have attained this high status. But strangely enough I did not see you do any extraordinary deed.' Then I asked him: 'What gave you this high status?' He said, 'I have no deed more than what you have seen.' I heard this and was about to return. He called me back and said: 'O Yes, there is something. I do not harbour in my heart any malice or evil against any Muslim, I am not jealous or envious of any Muslim, if Allah has given him anything good.' Sayyidnā 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Amr Ibn-ul-'Āṣ ؓ said: 'That exactly is the quality that has taken you to the lofty status.'"

Having cited this narration, Ibn Kathīr says that Nasā'ī has also cited this narration in his '*Amal-ul-Yawm wal-Laylah*' and its chain of narrators is authentic according to the standard of Bukhārī and Muslim.

All Muslims after the Muhājirīn and the Anṣār are entitled to *fai'*

وَالَّذِينَ جَاءُوا مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ "And [*fai'* is also] for those who came after them59:10) This verse lays down that all Muslims until the Last Hour, after the noble Companions from amongst the Muhājirīn and Anṣār, are entitled to a share in the *fai'* property. This was the reason why Sayyidnā 'Umar Al-Fārūq رضي الله عنه conquered great territories like 'Irāq, Syria, Egypt and so on, but did not distribute them among the fighters. He retained them as public endowment for next generations, so that the income might accrue to the Islamic public treasury, and the Muslims till the Last Hour may benefit from it. When some of the blessed Companions enquired about the distribution of the conquered territories, he referred to this verse and said: "Had it not been for the future generations of Muslims, I would have distributed all the conquered territories among the fighters as they were captured, following the example of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. When Khaibar was conquered, the Holy Prophet ﷺ distributed all its lands. If all the lands are distributed among the present Muslim generation, nothing will be left for future generations." [Transmitted by Mālik and Qurṭubī].

Love for the Blessed Companions is a sign that the Ummah is on Truth

On this occasion, Allah has put the Ummah of Muḥammad ﷺ into three different categories: [1] Muhājirīn; [2] Anṣār; and [3] the general body of the Ummah. The special characteristics of the Muhājirīn and the sterling qualities of the Anṣār are described in the relevant verses above. As for the merits of the rest of the Ummah, the verse merely mentions one quality of theirs that they recognize the high status of Muhājirīn and the Anṣār in that they had preceded them in faith and were means of communicating it to us. Further, they pray for forgiveness of all, and also pray that their own hearts be completely cleansed of all bitterness and spite towards true and sincere Muslims.

This shows that for the validity and acceptance of faith and Islam of all the coming generations of Muslims, after the blessed Companions, it is a necessary condition that they have love and respect for the Companions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, and pray for their brethren in Faith of earlier generations. Where this necessary condition is lacking, such people are not worthy of being called Muslims. Therefore, Sayyidnā Mus'ab Ibn Sa'd

ﷺ says that the Muslims of this Ummah are divided into three categories, of which two categories [those of Muhājirīn and Anṣār] have already been mentioned. The third category remains. If anyone wishes to have a place in the Ummah, he should join the third category by showing love, respect and honour to the blessed Companions.

Someone approached Sayyidnā Ḥusain ﷺ and inquired about Sayyidnā 'Uthmān ﷺ [who had by then been martyred], the former asked the inquirer: "Are you one of the Muhājirīn?" He replied : "No". Then he asked him: "Are you one of the Anṣār?" He replied: "No." He then said: "There remains only the third verse *الَّذِينَ جَاءُوا مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ*" And... those who came after them...[59:10]: If you wish to create doubt about Sayyidnā 'Uthmān ﷺ, then you will have to leave this category as well.'

Qurṭubī says that this verse is a proof that love of the blessed Companions is obligatory. Sayyidnā Imām Mālik رحمه الله تعالى says that any person who reviles a Companion or holds a grudge against him, will not have a share in the *fai'* property of the Muslims. Then he argues, on the basis of this verse, that every Muslim has a share in the *fai'* property, and anyone who has no share, his faith in Islam is doubtful.

Sayyidnā 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Abbās ﷺ has stated that Allah has commanded all Muslims to pray for the Companions of Muḥammad ﷺ and for their forgiveness, whereas Allah knew that there would be conflicts and civil wars between them. Therefore, it is not permissible for any Muslim to hold evil thoughts about them on account of their conflicts.

Sayyidah 'Ā'shah Ṣiddiqah رضي الله عنها says, "I have heard your Holy Prophet ﷺ say that this community will not perish unless the later generations curse the earlier generations."

Sayyidnā 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Umar ﷺ says: "When you hear anyone reviling a Companion, tell him, 'May the curse of Allah be upon the one who is the worst of you.'" Obviously, no Companion can ever be worse. The one who is cursing would be the worst one. In a word, it is a cause of curse to revile a Companion.

'Amr Ibn Ḥaushab رحمه الله تعالى says: "I have found the earlier generations of this Ummah uniformly and strongly advise people to describe the merits of the noble Companions and their good qualities, so

that they may develop love for them. Do not ever talk about their conflicts and disagreements, so that people may become bold and show disrespect to them." [All these narratives have been adapted from Qurṭubī].

Verses 11 - 17

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ نَافَقُوا يَقُولُونَ لِإِخْوَانِهِمُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ أَهْلِ
الْكِتَابِ لَئِنْ أُخْرِجْتُمْ لَنَخْرُجَنَّ مَعَكُمْ وَلَا نَطِيعُ فِيكُمْ أَحَدًا أَبَدًا ۖ
وَإِنْ قُوتِلْتُمْ لَنَنْصُرَنَّكُمْ ۖ وَاللَّهُ يَشْهَدُ إِنَّهُمْ لَكَاذِبُونَ ﴿١١﴾ لَئِنْ
أُخْرِجُوا لَا يَخْرُجُونَ مَعَهُمْ ۚ وَلَئِنْ قُوتِلُوا لَا يَنْصُرُونَهُمْ ۚ وَلَئِنْ
نَصَرُوهُمْ لَيُوَلِّنَنَّ الْأَدْبَارَ ثُمَّ لَا يَنْصُرُونَ ﴿١٢﴾ لَأَنْتُمْ أَشَدُّ رَهْبَةً فِي
صُدُورِهِمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ ۖ ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَوْمٌ لَا يَفْقَهُونَ ﴿١٣﴾ لَا يَقَاتِلُونَكُمْ
جَمِيعًا إِلَّا فِي قُرَى مُحَصَّنَةٍ أَوْ مِنْ وَرَاءِ جُدُرٍ ۖ بَأْسُهُمْ بَيْنَهُمْ شَدِيدٌ
تَحْسَبُهُمْ جَمِيعًا وَقُلُوبُهُمْ شَتَّى ۖ ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَوْمٌ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ ﴿١٤﴾
كَمَثَلَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ قَرِيبًا ذَاقُوا وَبَالَ أَمْرِهِمْ ۚ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ
﴿١٥﴾ كَمَثَلِ الشَّيْطَانِ إِذْ قَالَ لِلْإِنْسَانِ اكْفُرْ ۖ فَلَمَّا كَفَرَ قَالَ إِنِّي
بَرِيءٌ مِمَّنْكَ إِنِّي أَخَافُ اللَّهَ رَبَّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿١٦﴾ فَكَانَ عَاقِبَتُهُمَا
أَنَّهُمَا فِي النَّارِ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا ۖ وَذَلِكَ جَزَاءُ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿١٧﴾

Did you not see the hypocrites saying to their brothers who disbelieve from the people of the Book, "If you are expelled, we will certainly go out with you, and we will not obey any one about you. And if you are fought against, we will definitely help you." And Allah bears witness that they are pure liars. [11] If they are expelled, they will not go out with them, and if they are fought against, they will not help them. And even if they help them, they will surely turn their backs; then they will not be helped. [12] In fact, your fear in their hearts is greater than (that of) Allah. That is because they are a people who do not understand. [13] They do not fight you, even assembled together, but in fortified

towns, or from behind the walls. Their battle between themselves is severe. You think that they are united, while their hearts are divided. That is because they are a people who have no sense. [14] The example (of Banū Naḍīr) is like those who were before them in near past, (i.e. the Jews of Banū Qainuqa') who tasted the evil consequence of their conduct, and for them (in the Hereafter) there is a painful punishment. [15] The example (of the hypocrites) is like the Shaitān when he says to a human being, "Become a disbeliever" then once he disbelieves, he says, "I disown you; I fear Allah, the Lord of the worlds." [16] So the end of both of them is that they will be in the Fire, living there forever. And that is the punishment of the wrongdoers. [17]

Commentary

كَمَثَلِ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ قَرِيبًا (...like those who were before them in near past59:15) This refers to the case of Banū Naḍīr, and Mujahid رحمه الله تعالى says that the phrase الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ قَرِيبًا "those who were before them in near past" refers to the Quraish of Makkah who sustained an ignominious defeat at Badr. According to Sayyidnā 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Abbās رضي الله عنه, it refers to Banū Qainuqa', a Jewish tribe, who were punished for their mischief and machinations after Badr. Banū Naḍīr were banished after the battles of Badr and 'Uḥud, and Banū Qainuqa' had been banished after Badr. At Badr seventy thousand pagan Arabs were killed, and the survivors returned home disgracefully. Since pagans of Makkah and Banū qainuqa', both of them faced a deterrent punishment after Badr, both can be the purport of the words, 'who were before them in the past, and of : ذَاقُوا وَبَالَ أَمْرِهُمْ "...tasted the evil consequence of their conduct...[59:15]"

The Expulsion of Banū Qainuqa'

As stated earlier, when the Holy Prophet ﷺ migrated from Makkah and settled in Madīnah, he concluded a peace treaty with the Jewish tribes of Madīnah, and of its neighbourhood. One of its conditions stipulated that they would not fight the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and the Muslims, or assist their enemies. Banū Qainuqa' was a party to this peace agreement and was the first one to break the pledged word, within a few months. On the occasion of the battle of Badr, they connived with the Quraish of Makkah, and some incidents of their connivance came out in the open. On that occasion, the following verse was revealed وَإِنَّمَا تَخَافْنَ مِنْ قَوْمٍ خِيَانَةً فَانْزِلْ إِلَيْهِمْ عَلَى سَوَاءٍ (And if you apprehend a breach from a people, then,

throw [the treaty] towards them being right forward ...[8:58]". Banū Qainuqā', through their treachery, had already broken the treaty. Therefore, The Holy Prophet ﷺ declared war against them and the banner of *jihād* was given in the hands of Sayyidnā Ḥamzah ؓ and, appointing Sayyidnā Abū Lubābah ؓ his deputy in the city of Madīnah, the Holy Prophet ﷺ himself joined the fighting force. Having seeing the Muslim army, the Jews shut themselves up in the fortress. The Holy Prophet ﷺ laid a siege to it for fifteen days, and the Jews had no choice but to surrender. Eventually, Allah cast terror into their hearts and they realized that fighting would not pay off. So, they opened the gate of the fortress and expressed their willingness to abide by the decision of the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

The Holy Prophet's ﷺ decision was to have the Jewish men executed. But 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Ubayy, the hypocrite, intervened and pleaded to the Holy Prophet ﷺ to pardon them. In the end, it was decided that they should leave the area and go into exile and their belongings would be the spoils falling to the lot of the Muslims. Accordingly, they left Madīnah and proceeded to settle in an area called Adhra'āt in Syria. In compliance with the law of spoils, one-fifth was retained for *Bait-ul-Māl* [public treasury] and the rest of the spoils was disbursed among the fighters. After the battle of Badr, this was the first one-fifth of the booties that was retained for the public treasury. This incident took place on Monday, 15th Shawwāl, in the 2nd year of Hijrah - twenty months after the migration.

كَمَثَلِ الشَّيْطَانِ إِذْ قَالَ لِلْإِنْسَانِ اكْفُرْ (The example [of the hypocrites] is like the Shaiṭān when he says to a human being, "Become a disbeliever" then once he disbelieves, he says, "I disown you; I fear Allah, the Lord of the worlds."...59:16) This is another example of the hypocrites who made false promises of solidarity and support to the Banū Naḍīr, and provoked the latter to fight against the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. But when the Muslims besieged them, not a single hypocrite came forward to assist. The Qur'ān here uses a simile to illustrate the similarity between a hypocrite and the Satan. The Satan incited man to disbelieve and promised him the world, but when he was seriously involved in disbelief, he said that he has nothing to do with him. Only Allah knows how many such episodes the devil must have been involved in, textually, however, we find one such episode narrated in the Qur'ān in Sūrah Anfāl, verse [48] :

وَإِذْ زَيْنَ لَهُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ أَعْمَالَهُمْ وَقَالَ لَا غَالِبَ لَكُمْ الْيَوْمَ مِنَ النَّاسِ وَإِنِّي جَارٌ لَكُمْ
فَلَمَّا تَرَأَتِ الْفِئَتَيْنِ نَكَصَ عَلَى عَقْبَيْهِ وَقَالَ إِنِّي بَرِيءٌ مِنْكُمْ إِنِّي أَرَى مَا لَا تَرَوْنَ إِنِّي
أَخَافُ اللَّهَ وَاللَّهُ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ.

"And when the Satan beautified their deeds for them and said, 'None of the people is to overpower you today, and I am a protector for you.' But, when the two groups saw each other, he turned back on his heels and said, 'I have nothing to do with you. I am seeing what you do not see. I am scared of Allah, and Allah is severe in punishment.'"

This incident occurred on the occasion of the battle of Badr when the Satan misled the pagan Quraish, urged them to wage a war against Muslims, and then he withdrew, and left them in the lurch when they were in the middle of a pitched-battle. It is not clear how the Satan did all this, whether he cast suggestions into their minds or whether he came to them in human shape and spoke to them face to face. A full explanation is available in Volume [4] of Ma'āriful Qur'ān, pages 242-247.

If the verse refers to this incident, in which the Satan provokes man to disbelieve and when he does that, he washes his hands of them, it does not seem that the Satan asked them to commit *kufr*, because they were already *kāfirs*. He asked them to be firm in opposing the Messenger. The answer is all too obvious, in that it is all the same whether he asked them to commit *kufr*, or bids them to remain firm in their *kufr* or fight the Messenger of Allah, because it is also tantamount to *kufr*.

Tafsīr Mazharī, Qurṭubī, Ibn Kathīr and others have cited several incidents where monks and devotees were deceived into *kufr*. For example, one of the Israeli monks devoted himself to Allah in his synagogue, and fasted consecutively and broke his fast only once in ten days. In this way, he spent seventy years of his life. The accursed Satan pursued him. He sent after him the most cunning devil in the shape of a monk, a devotee of God. He went up to him and exerted himself in the worship of God and thus built up confidence in the genuine monk. Eventually, the impostor succeeded in teaching the monk a few of the prayers that are efficacious in curing the sickly people. Then the former exerted his influence on many people to fall sick, and gave them the monk's address. When the latter recited the prayers, the devil would remove his influence and thus they would feel cured. He kept up this

process for a long period of time, until one day he performed his exertion on the beautiful daughter of an Israeli leader. He sent her also to the monk. He succeeded in getting her into his synagogue and gradually he succeeded in getting him to commit fornication with the girl who, as a result, fell pregnant. He suggested that the girl be killed to save face. After the killing, the devil himself went around telling the story of the killing and put up the people against the monk. They, in their fury, demolished the synagogue and decided to kill him and crucify him. Then the Satan went back to the monk and said to him that there is no way out to save his life. 'Of course', he said to him, 'there is one way of saving your life, in that you prostrate to me and I will save your life.' The monk had already committed all the sins. The way to commit *kufr* was paved. So, he prostrated. At that juncture, the Satan said to him plainly, 'You were not falling into my trap. I adopted all these guiles for you to commit *kufr*. I cannot assist you in any way.' This story is recounted fully in Tafsīr Maḥzarī and Qurtubī. Allah, the Pure and Exalted, knows best!

Verses 18 - 24

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَلْتَنْظُرْ نَفْسٌ مَّا قَدَّمَتْ لِغَدٍ وَاتَّقُوا
 اللَّهَ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٨﴾ وَلَا تَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ نَسُوا
 اللَّهَ فَأَنْسَاهُمْ أَنْفُسَهُمْ ۚ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ ﴿١٩﴾ لَا يَسْتَوِي
 أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ وَأَصْحَابُ الْجَنَّةِ ۚ أَصْحَابُ الْجَنَّةِ هُمُ الْفَائِزُونَ
 ﴿٢٠﴾ لَوْ أَنزَلْنَا هَٰذَا الْقُرْآنَ عَلَىٰ جَبَلٍ لَّرَأَيْتَهُ خَاشِعًا مُّتَصَدِّعًا مِّنْ
 خَشْيَةِ اللَّهِ ۚ وَتِلْكَ الْأَمْثَالُ نَضْرِبُهَا لِلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿٢١﴾
 هُوَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ۚ عِلْمُ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ ۚ هُوَ الرَّحْمَنُ
 الرَّحِيمُ ﴿٢٢﴾ هُوَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ۚ الْمَلِكُ الْقُدُّوسُ السَّلَامُ
 الْمُؤْمِنُ الْمُهِيمُنُ الْعَزِيزُ الْجَبَّارُ الْمُتَكَبِّرُ ۚ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ عَمَّا
 يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾ هُوَ اللَّهُ الْخَالِقُ الْبَارِئُ الْمُصَوِّرُ لَهُ الْأَسْمَاءُ

الْحُسْنَى ط يُسَبِّحُ لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۖ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ
الْحَكِيمُ ﴿٤٤﴾

O those who believe, fear Allah, and everybody must consider what he (or she) has sent ahead for tomorrow. And fear Allah. Surely Allah is fully aware of what you do. [18] And do not be like those who forgot Allah, so He made them forget their own selves. Those are the sinners. [19] The people of the Fire and the people of the Paradise are not equal. The people of the Paradise are the successful. [20] Had We sent down this Qur'an to a mountain, you would have seen it humbled, burst apart out of awe for Allah. And such examples are cited by Us for the people, so that they may ponder. [21] He is Allah, besides whom there is no god, the Knower of the unseen and the seen. He is the All-Merciful, the Very-Merciful. [22] He is Allah, besides whom there is no god, the Sovereign, the Most Pure [from all defects], the Most Safe [from all defects], the Peace-Giver, the Guardian, the All-Mighty, the Restorer [of the losses], the Lord of Greatness. Pure is Allah from what they associate with Him. [23] He is Allah, the Creator, the Inventor, the Originator-Of-Shapes. His are the Most Beautiful Names. His purity is proclaimed by all that is in the heavens and the earth, and He is the All-Mighty, the All-Wise. [24]

Commentary

The Command to Taqwā and to prepare for the Day of Resurrection

The earlier parts of Sūrah Al-Ḥashr has described different events relating to the Jews, the pagans and the hypocrites and their punishments in this world and in the next. Now the concluding part of the Sūrah makes the believers conscious of their duty towards Allah and advises them to perform the righteous deeds regularly.

The first verse in this set reads **يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَلْتَنْظُرْ نَفْسٌ مَّا قَدَّمَتْ لِغَدٍ** (O those who believe, fear Allah, and everybody must consider what he [or she] has sent ahead for tomorrow.59:18) In an eloquent style, the verse enjoins upon the believers to take care of the Hereafter and commands them to prepare for it. Here a few points need to be considered:

First: In this verse, the Hereafter is described as *ghad* [tomorrow], which means the 'day after today'. This points to two things. First of all, it means that the entire period of this world, compared to the Hereafter, is very short. That is, this entire world, in relation to the Hereafter, is like one day. In fact, in terms of pure calculation, this comparison too is difficult to imagine, because the Hereafter is eternal which will exist without an end. The age of human world is said to be a few thousand years old. If this is calculated with the creation of the heaven and the earth, it will extend to a few million years, which in any case will be a limited period. This is no comparison to an unlimited or infinite period of time. Some Traditions state *الدُّنْيَا يَوْمٌ وَلَنَا فِيهِ صَوْمٌ* (The entire world is a day and on that day we fast.) Whether we calculate from human creation or from the creation of the heaven and the earth, it does not matter, because neither of these factors is important for a human individual. In fact, every individual's world is made up of the days and years of his age. Every person should be able to realize how short a period that is in relation to the eternity of the Hereafter.

Second of all, this verse shows that the Day of Resurrection is as certain as the arrival of tomorrow after today which is a stark reality, and no one doubts it. Likewise the Hereafter is beyond any reasonable doubt.

Thirdly, the Day of Resurrection will happen very shortly. Just as tomorrow is not very far away from today, it is thought to be very near, likewise, the Day of Resurrection will happen very soon after this world. The first phase of the Hour is when an individual dies, his Hour is already established as stated in a Tradition: *مَنْ مَاتَ فَقَدْ قَامَتْ قِيَامَتُهُ* "He who dies, his Day of Judgement has been established" because the signs of the next world start from the grave and examples of reward and punishment come forward. The world of grave or the world of *barzakh* is like a waiting room in this world which accommodates all types of people, ranging from the first class to the third class. The waiting room of the criminals is the prison house. A person should be able to determine his position and status in the waiting room. Therefore, every person's Judgement Day starts with his death. Man's death has been made such a puzzling phenomenon that not even the greatest philosopher or scientist can with any degree of certainty determine the exact time of its occurrence. In fact, every coming moment is fraught with the danger that one may not live to see it,

especially in this time and age when it is moving at the pace of lightning and heart-failure is the order of the day. The second phase of the Hour is when the entire world, the heaven and earth and everything else, will perish, though this might take place after hundreds of thousands of years, it is very close in relation to the eternity of the Hereafter .

In short, this verse by describing *qiyāmah* [Doomsday] as *ghad* [tomorrow] made man conscious of the fact that the Doomsday is not very far off; it is very close like tomorrow. It is also possible that it might come even before tomorrow.

The second point put by this verse for consideration is that the arrival of Doomsday being certain and also near, everyone is invited to think what he has prepared for the Day of Resurrection. This shows that his original abode is the Hereafter. His residence in this world is like a wayfarer. It is necessary to send something from here for the eternal abode. The main purpose of man's residence is to live here, acquire and accumulate things and send them forward to the eternal abode of the Hereafter. It is quite obvious that no material wealth or property can be taken with from this world. There is only one way of transferring wealth [gold, silver, money and so on] from one country to another, that is to deposit it into the bank from where the currency of another country is obtained. In exactly the same manner, wealth is spent in the way of Allah and the sacred laws of Allah are implemented and deposited in the Divinely celestial bank, where the currency of reward is recorded in the celestial Account-Book. When a believer reaches the eternal abode, it is handed over to him without claim or demand.

The phrase مَا قَدَّمَتْ لِغَدٍ 'what he (or she) has sent ahead' carries the general sense of the good, as well as, the bad deeds. He who sends forth good deeds will obtain the currency of reward in the Hereafter; and he who sends forth evil deeds will be indicted in the Hereafter. The command of "...fear Allah...[18]" has been repeated. It could be for emphasis, or the first of such command is for man to fulfil the obligatory and imperative duties, and the repetition of the command is to abstain from sins. The second explanation is given by Maulānā Ashraf ‘Alī Thānawī رحمه الله تعالى.

Also, it is possible that the first command to fear Allah is to send forth good deeds for the Hereafter by acting upon imperatives set by Allah, and

the second command to fear is to ensure that what is being sent is not fake or counterfeit. Fake or counterfeit deeds, in relation to the Hereafter, would imply the deeds done seem to be genuinely righteous deeds, but they lack sincerity of purpose and the good pleasure of Allah. What was done ostentatiously or for ulterior motive or an ostensible action that seems like an act of worship, but having no base in religion, it is tantamount to innovation (*Bid'ah*). Thus the second command to fear Allah implies that for the Hereafter it is not sufficient to merely accumulate ostensible actions, but to send forth genuine deeds performed with sincerity according to the rules set in religion. Spurious actions will not be acceptable there.

فَانَسِيَهُمْ أَنْفُسَهُمْ (...so He made them forget their own selves....59:19) It means they did not forget Allah but themselves, because they are unaware of their own loss and gain.

لَوْ أَنْزَلْنَا هَذَا الْقُرْآنَ عَلَى جَبَلٍ (Had We sent down this Qur'ān to a mountain,59:21) This is a parable that Allah is using to illustrate the fact that if the Holy Qur'ān were to be revealed on such strong, firm and unmovable mountain and endowed with intelligence like man, it would have submitted to the greatness of the Qur'ān, nay, it would have crushed to pieces. But man is too selfish and proud. As a result, he has lost his natural intelligence and remains unaffected by the powerful message of the Qur'ān. This, it would appear, is a hypothetical example, that is 'if mountains had sense or intelligence. Some scholars have stated that reason and revelation both bear testimony to the fact that everything in nature has sense, perception and intelligence, be it a mountain or a tree. Therefore, this is not a hypothetical example. It is a stark reality. [Maḥzarī]. And Allah knows best!

A Few of Allah's Attributes of Perfection

Having urged the people to be concerned about the Hereafter and having asserted the greatness of the Qur'ān, this Sūrah is concluded with a few of Allah's attributes of perfection, as follows:

عَلِيمُ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ (...the Knower of the unseen and the seen - 23). The attribute 'the Knower of the Unseen and the seen' means that Allah knows all things, visible or invisible.

الْقُدُّوسُ The attribute Al-Quddūs means 'the Most Pure from all defects',

that is, Allah is the Being Who is free from all kinds of defect, deficiency and imperfection which are not in conformity to His Supreme status.

المُؤْمِن The word *mu'min*, when applied to a human being, means a believer, but when this attribute is applied to Allah, it means the one who provides peace and safety, as explained by Ibn 'Abbās رضي الله عنه. It means that He provides safety and perfect peace to those who believe in Allah and His Messengers.

المُهَيِّم The attribute *Al-Muhaimin*, according to Ibn 'Abbās رضي الله عنه, Mujāhid and Qatādah means 'Guardian'. The Arabic lexicon *Al-Qamus* has explained that its root is '*hamn*' which means 'to look after or take care of or watch over'. [Maẓharī].

الْعَزِيز The attribute *Al-'Azīz* means 'the Almighty'.

الْجَبَّار The attribute *Al-Jabbār* means the One who is dominant. It could also be derived from the word *jabr*, meaning to 'join broken bones' and thus we have the word *jabīrah*, which refers to the bandage or plaster that is used in binding the broken bones. From this point of view, the attribute would mean that Allah is the Being Who sets aright every broken and useless things, matters or restores all losses and rectifies situations or mends every breakage.

الْمُتَكَبِّر The attribute *Al-Mutakabbir* [the Lord of Greatness] is derived from *takabbur* and that from *kibriyā'* meaning 'greatness' which is one of the peculiar characteristics of Allah. It implies that every greatness is attributable only to Allah who is not in need of anyone. Whoever is in need cannot be great. Therefore, if this word is used for a person other than Allah, it is a defect and sin, because the claim of greatness by a person who is not actually great is false and tantamount to a claim of being a partner of Allah, the Besought of all, in one of His exclusive attributes. That is why the word *Al-Mutakabbir*, when attributed to Allah is an attribute of perfection, but in respect of others it is no more than a false claim.

الْمُصَوِّر (...the Originator of all Shapes....59:24) In other words, He gives shape to every thing He creates. He has given particular shapes to all creatures whereby they are distinguished from one another. Every species has a shape distinguishable from all other species. Within one species too,

there are differences in shape between males and females. Then there are uncountable differences between the shapes of the individuals of even one sex. The excellence of shaping or fashioning is of such high degree that the shapes of zillions of men and women are different from one another in a way that no face is an absolute copy of some other face. Had it not been so, no one could be distinguished from the other. This excellence and perfection of creative power belongs to none but Allah. Just as *takabbur* (show of greatness) is not permissible for anyone other than Allah [as *kibriyā'* is His exclusive attribute'], likewise no one, besides Allah, is permitted to do picture-making, because that too is the exclusive characteristic of Allah, and picture-making is an implied claim of being associate with Allah in this attribute.

لَهُ الْأَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنَى (... His are the Most Beautiful Names59:24). The Holy Qur'ān has not given the exact number of these Most Beautiful Names of Allah. Authentic Prophetic *aḥādīth* have counted them ninety-nine. Tirmidhī has collected all the ninety-nine names in one Tradition. Many scholars have written full books on the subject of *Asmā'ul-Ḥusnā* or 'Most Beautiful Names of Allah'. The present writer has also compiled a concise monograph on the subject of 'Most Beautiful Names of Allah' published as an annexure to *Munājāt-i-Maqbūl* (by Maulānā Ashraf 'Alī Thanawī رحمه الله تعالى).

يُسَبِّحُ لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ (...His purity is proclaimed by all that is in the heavens and the earth59:24). That all creatures in the heavens and the earth declare the purity of Allah in unuttered language is self-evident: The wonderful, marvelous and amazing things created by Allah, and the awe-inspiring and staggering shapes fashioned by Him proclaim the praises of their Creator in unuttered language. However, it is possible too that the word '*tasbīḥ*' is used here in its real and literal sense, because according to the authentic view everything in this universe has some kind of sense that accords to its ability. Now, the foremost and primary requirement of this sense is to recognize one's Creator and paying gratitude to Him. Based on this premise, it is not far-fetched to conceive that everything in nature really declares the purity of Allah in articulate language, though human ears might not be able to hear it. Thus the Qur'ān on one occasion says وَلَكِنْ لَا تَفْقَهُونَ تَسْبِيحَهُمْ (...but you do not understand their extolling.) (17:44)

Benefits and Blessings of the Concluding Verses of Sūrah Al-Ḥashr

It is recorded in Tirmidhī on the authority of Sayyidnā Ma‘qil Ibn Yasār رضي الله عنه that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ has stated that Allah appoints 70,000 angels who pray for Divine mercy for anyone who recites the following three times: **أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ السَّمِيعِ الْعَلِيمِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ** and the last three verses of Sūrah Al-Ḥashr **هُوَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ**. If he dies the same day, he will attain the status of a martyr. If a person recites the same solemn words in the evening, he will attain the same status. [Maḏharī].

Alḥamdulillah
The Commentary on
Sūrah Al-Ḥashr
Ends here